

Precinct Reporter

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Food Bank

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food because the need remains great.

"We're the largest food bank serving both Riverside and San Bernardino counties; we deal bulk in truckloads. We get what you would buy off the shelf tomorrow; we do not distribute anything that's a day old. It's good food," she said.

Community Action Partnership of San Bernardino County will be looking for participation from local candidates to help represent low income residents within the first, third and fourth supervisorial districts.

District One covers Adelanto, Apple Valley, Barstow, Goffs, Hesperia, Lucerne Valley, Twentynine Palms and Victorville. District Three covers Big Bear, Grand Terrace, Highland, Loma Linda, Redlands, San Bernardino, Yucaipa and Yucca Valley; District Four covers Chino, Chino Hills, Ontario and Montclair.

CAP, a 15-member board made up of public, private and low income directors, serves over 800,000 low income people within the county. The partnership meets the third Tuesday of each month at 696 South Tippecanoe, San Bernardino at 4:30 p.m.

Nominations must be filed by February 28 for the March 22 election.

For CAP election guidelines, call (909) 891-3863.

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"We've got to install racks for the food. Moving our refrigerators, these units we have are huge, they have to be taken apart, piece by piece, and put together again," he said, adding it takes about six weeks to move one unit, and they have five units.

"This place is just way too small for the county, we needed a bigger facility," he said. "It's going to be a much better facility."

He receives over four million pounds of food a year, and one reason why he hasn't aggressively tried to get more food from the private sector is that there was no place to store it. With the extra room, he said he may become a Second Harvest food distributor where nonprofits can purchase food for distribution for pennies on the pound.

"I think it can happen," he said. "There's too many people in this county that needs help."

The food bank feeds about 22,000 people per month, severely short of the 400,000 in the county who are going hungry. Pena referenced a survey last year from the California Food Policy Advocates that found San Bernardino had at least 488,000 people needing food assistance.

"That's a lot of people; we're talking less

than two million people here in the county," he said. "It's a poor county."

Tracy Lyn-Sharrit, director of development for Riverside County Second Harvest Food Bank, said that all of the fine points of how to become a distributor of food for the needy are covered on the first Wednesday of every month.

The orientation lets nonprofits know where to start, how they can qualify to distribute food. There is a \$50 nonrefundable fee for the application.

The food bank distributes about 22 million pounds yearly between San Bernardino and Riverside counties through the 450 agencies that shop there. The food costs 18 cents for every pound, and people can shop as frequently as once a week, and get enough food as necessary for their nonprofit.

"We have people that come here for grassroots church distribution, they may be feeding 25 or 30 within their immediate area of their church, and the distribution depends on the need," she said.

She said the food bank is also considering going after a larger facility that will increase

Feeding a Hungry Community

By Dianne Anderson
Staff Writer

Not a lot of alms for the poor lately, but watching people fish through trash cans for dinner still manages to stir up some emotion for a few remaining diehard advocates who'd like to help, but are not sure how.

One thing goes without question, there is always a need for food; hunger is not subsiding.

Henry Pena, director of the San Bernardino County Food Bank, said for those who want to get involved distributing food, it requires a 501c3 nonprofit status, and they must be able to consistently feed about 100 persons a week to qualify for food assistance from the county's USDA-supplied food bank.

In recent weeks, the food bank has been in the process of moving to their new Tippecanoe location, which will provide about three times the current storage space.

The Food Bank is a program of the Community Action Partnership of San Bernardino County; they notified all participating nonprofits of the relocation, he said. It's been a huge task juggling the move and continuing to service local agencies.